

This reply is submitted pursuant to 35 U.S.C. §132 and 37 C.F.R. §1.111. The Office Action was carefully considered by the undersigned attorney and applicant. Reconsideration of the application is respectfully requested.

1. Summary of the Office Action.

Claims 1, 3-5 and 7-9 were pending.

Claim 3 stands objected to.

Claims 1, 3-5 and 7-9 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C §103(a) over Ventura-Berti (594) in view of Savoca ('160).

2. Discussion.

Claim 1. Independent Claim 1 was rejected under 35 USC §103(a) as being unpatentable over Ventura-Berti (USP 5339594) in view of Savoca (USP 5335160). Claim 1 as once amended requires that a post have, *inter alia*, an electrically conductive lead which is integrally formed with and connected to a tube. Neither Ventura-Berti nor Savoca show this structure. Ventura-Berti does not show any conductive lead. Savoca shows a conductive lead but it is disposed in the hollow core of the post. Nowhere in the applied prior art is the conductive lead shown integrally disposed in the tube structure of a post. The examiner stated that it would be obvious "to combine Ventura-Berti and Savoca". Applicant respectfully disagrees because the advantages (for example, simplicity of assembly) provided by applicant's invention would have been apparent to Ventura - Berti and used by him, but for the unobviousness of applicant's structure. However, regardless of whether the combination of references *per se* is obvious or not, such combination would still fall short of meeting the claimed invention. The conductive lead must be integrally formed with the tube. Claim 1 as once amended is believed to be patentable and withdrawal of the rejection is requested.

Applicant wishes to clarify that he does not disclose or claim a "lead" (wire structure) constructed of lead (the element (Pb) or material).

3. Conclusion.

The claims pending after this amendment are believed to be patentable for the reasons stated above. The amendments are believed to be supported by the specification, claims and drawings as filed. It is believed that this case is now in a condition for allowance. Reconsideration and favorable action are respectfully requested.

Should the Examiner believe that telephone communication would advance the prosecution of this case to finality, he is invited to call at the number below.

It is respectfully requested that, if necessary to effect a timely response, this paper be considered as a Petition for an Extension of Time under 37 CFR 1.136(a), provided a Petition is not submitted separately.

Please charge any fee due not paid by a check provided herewith, and/or charge any underpayment in any fee, and/or credit any overpayment in fee, to Deposit Account No. 19-2381.

Respectfully submitted,



Joel D. Skinner, Jr.
Reg. No. 33,786

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Skinner and Associates
619 Second Street, Suite 201
Hudson, Wisconsin 54016
Tel.: (715) 386-5800
FAX: (715) 386-6177
Internet e-mail: info@skinnerlaw.com